

Media Institutions

The influence of owners and proprietors

Name and date begun:

Time allocation:

2 lessons

Learning objectives:

- Students should understand that the control of media companies is tended towards massive media conglomerates owned by a very few people.
- Does this tendency create a single (right wing? hegemonic?) world view adopted by media companies and foisted on an unsuspecting public?
- Do proprietors use their influence to affect world events?

Key Concepts and vocabulary

See your lesson notes for a list of ideologies and philosophies. These must be learned in addition to the following:

- Ownership
- Ideology
- Media
- Pluralism
- Hegemony
- Globalisation
- Consumer fetishism

Additional reading and references

Graeme Burton (1998) *Access to Sociology: Media and Popular Culture* Chapter 4 page 37

This section is compulsory reading - make sure that you thoroughly understand pages 43 - 50.

Paul Trowler (1996) *Sociology in Action: Investigating the Mass Media (2nd Edition)* page 63 ff.

Pay particular attention to pages 70 - 77. List examples of direct expressions of political interference in the content of the news.

Personal Development ideas

- Find out more about the work of pressure groups such as Amnesty International or groups which directly challenge governments by using the Internet. How many 'spiked' stories which are critical of government can you find?
- Rent the videos of the comedy films *Wag the Dog*, *Bob Roberts* or *Primary Colors* and watch them. They are all concerned with overt political manipulation of the media.

Overview of the debate

- Can owners control governments?
- Can governments control the media?
- Can we be aware of attempts to control and manipulate?
- If the media control the information that we receive, how accurate is that information?

Revision tips

- Be sure that you fully understand the key concepts of pluralism, determinism and resistance.
- Consider the importance and significance of the independent media.
- Are governments in the hands of media companies? Are media companies in the hands of governments?

What you should have in your folder when this work has been completed correctly:

- A clear explanation of each of the glossary terms
- Acceptable lesson notes.
- Evidence that you have looked the two textbooks and made notes

You should also have an essay to the title:

Evaluate the sociological evidence to suggest that media companies only allow us a biased and one-sided view of world events.